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December 7th, 2014

Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association (GLTPA) position paper supporting Senate Bill 78, a bill to amend 1994 PA 451, entitled "Natural resources and environmental protection act"
Submitted by: Henry Schienebeck, GLTPA Executive Director

House Natural Recourses Committee Members,

The Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association is hereby stating its support for Senate Bill 78 for the "Conservation of Biological Diversity". As stated in SB 78 conservation of biological diversity "means measures for maintaining, managing, or enhancing biological diversity while ensuring accessibility, productivity, and use of the natural resources for present and future generations."

Information included within this position paper is taken from the "Global Biodiversity Assessment" (GBA) published by Cambridge University Press in January 1995 for the United Nations Environmental Program, (UNEP) chapter 11 titled "Human Influences on Biodiversity." The GBA is an 1140 page independent, peer reviewed analysis of the biological and social aspects of biodiversity, commissioned by the UN Environmental Program. As stated in the forward the UNEP received written submissions from experts in more than 80 countries, who peer reviewed various parts of the assessment in their personal time. It should also be noted the Assessment does not concern itself with the assessment of the state of country-level or regional biodiversity but it does move toward a scientific basis for biodiversity **management** in all regions.

As stated in the GBA humans depend on biological resources for food, energy, medicine, building material and a variety of other benefits. In fact humans and biodiversity have had a close and mutually supportive relationship for tens of thousands of years. One thing we must never forget is that biological resources have the critical character of being "**RENEWABLE**" when they are well managed.

While some may suggest preserving or taking biological areas out of production as a preferred method of management, there seems to be no support for this method. In fact a study by Walker (1989) in the GBA states; "Efforts to stabilize an ecosystem or to preserve an individual plant or animal species may be counterproductive, since ecosystem processes are the most critical value in conservation." Another study by Ryan (1992) in the GBA applies Walkers concept to intensively managed systems (i.e. forests) noting that diversification of products and production within a management area also improves the capacity to adapt to change. The findings also support comments in the Executive Summary of chapter 11 which state; "Human activities have helped to create substantial genetic and species diversity, and have increased the diversity of biological communities in particular regions through resource management practices and through the domestication of plants and animals. A number of traditional resource management practices have supported the maintenance of species and genetic diversity.

A good example of these studies is made in a recent discussion where MDNR was seeking to set aside an additional 116,397 acres of state forest as part of a certification corrective action. Included in the 116,397 acres are just over 28,000 acres of previously managed timberlands. Since management had already taken place on the 28,000 acres' one would be led to believe it must have maintained its ecological value or it would not be listed as part of the additional biodiversity area. In other words managing this area could very well have enhanced its ecological value while supplying much needed fiber to support Michigan's forest industry.

The way Michigan manages its resources will determine how much diversity survives and the way Michigan manages its biological diversity will determine the productivity of important resources and ecological services. As supported by many of the findings in the GBA, setting aside biodiversity areas for no management is not an acceptable action for the best use and benefit of Michigan residents. It is for that reason GLTPA fully supports SB 78.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Executive Director, GLTPA